

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-04 OMB-01 AID-05 DRC-01 /071 W

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R 101102Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7131

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY KABUL

6LHEMBASSY TEHRAN 2537

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 9714

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL VICE
L.O.U.)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJ: BALUCHISTAN: TOWARD ANOTHER TURNING POINT?

REF: 1) KARACHI 1873 (NOTAL); 2) ISLAMABAD A-149; 3) ISLAMABAD 9590

SUMMARY: GOP IS WORKING TO DEFUSE PROBLEM OF LOW LEVEL
INSURGENCY AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN BALUCHISTAN AND
PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO HAS PROMISED "GOOD" NEWS BY
OCTOBER 15 AMNESTY DEADLINE. PAK MILITARY SWEEPS OF
TROUBLED AREAS HAVE YIELDED 3,500 "SURRENDERS" OF
HOSTILES AND GOP HOPES THAT THIS, PLUS ADVANCING COLD
WEATHER, WILL KEEP INSURGENCY QUIESCENT IN THE SHORT
TERM. SIMULTANEOUSLY, THE GOP IS ATTEMPTING TO
SPLIT THE OPPOSITION FORCES AND PERSUADE SOME LEGISLATORS
TO SUPPORT A PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT COALITION. THIS
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WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, HOWEVER, AND IT IS CON-

CEIVABLE THAT GOVERNOR'S RULE WILL BE PROCLAIMED, GIVING GOP TIME TO BROADEN BASE OF A CURRENTLY INEFFICIENT AND CORRUPT BALUCHISTAN CABINET OR TO DISSOLVE ASSEMBLY AND PREPARE FOR NEW PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AMNESTY DEADLINE: A TURNING POINT? AS THE GOP-OFFERED AMNESTY DEADLINE FOR THE BALUCH INSURGENTS APPROACHES, THE PAK MILITARY, GOP AND SEVERAL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE MANEUVERING TO ENSURE THAT THEY WILL BE IN A FAVORABLE POSITION ON OCTOBER 15TH. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO HAS PROMISED TO MAKE A "GOOD", "PLEASANT" ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT BALUCHISTAN ON THE 14TH OR 15TH WHEN HE IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE PROV KNE. PAK MILITARY ARE ENGAGED IN LARGESCALE SWEEPING OPERATIONS AGAINST MARRI-MENGAL INSURGENTS, TH GOP IS ATTEMPTING TO GAIN SUPPORT OF SEVERAL LEGISLATORS AMONG PROVINCIAL OPPOSITION TO SHORE UP LEAKY COALITION GOVERNMENT, AND UNITEDEMOCRATIC FRONT (UDF) OF COMBINED OPPOSITION HAS EMBARKED ON CAMPAIGN TO PUT FOREIGN PRESSURE ON PRIM MINISTER BHUTTO TO DESIST FROM MILITARY CAMPAIGN AGAINST INSURGENTS AND THEIR SYMPATHIZERS AND TO AGREE TO POLITICAL COMPROMISE WHICH WOULD GIVE THEM SOME SHARE OF THE POWER.

2. THE INSURGENCY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL HOW MANY ACTIVE INSURGENTS OPERATE IN BALUCHISTAN AND WHAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO GET THEM TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS. GOP CLAIMED IN 1973 THAT THEY NUMBERED ONLY 400 BUT EMBASSY NOTES THAT THIS IS SAME NUMBER THAT ALLEGEDLY HELD OUT AGAINST PAK MILITARY FROM 1955 TO 1969, BEFORE BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE WAS CREATED. IN PAST FEW MONTHS GOP HAS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE 1,000 FULL TIME AND 10,000 PART TIME INSURGENTS IN MENGAL-MARRI TRIBAL AREAS WITH POPULATION OF ABOUT 50,000. BHUTTO, DURING LATE JULY TOUR OF PROVINCE, ANNOUNCED "AMNESTY" FOR THOSE HOSTILES WHO WOULD SURRENDER BEFORE OCTOBER 15 BUT THREATENED STEPPED-UP MILITARY ACTION AT THAT TIME AGAINST THOSE WHO PERSISTED IN REBELLION. AT SAME TIME, PAK MILITARY WERE GIVEN GREEN LIGHT TO PURSUE AND ROUND UP INSURGENTS. PAK MEDIA HAS ANNOUNCED "VOLUNTARY SURRENDER" OF 3,500 AS OF OCTOBER 8, ALTHOUGH PAK MILITARY HAVE TOLD US CONFIDENTIAL

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FIDENTIALLY THAT LARGE-SCALE CAPTURES ARE RESULT OF SWEEPING OPERATIONS. THE APPROACHING COLD WEATHER, WHICH MAY FORCE HOSTILES DOWN OUT OF THEIR REFUGE IN THE HILLS, IS ALSO WORKING IN THE GOVERNMENT'S FAVOR.

3. EMBASSY HAS INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO PREDICT STRENGTH OF INSURGENCY AS OF OCTOBER 15, BUT IT SEEMS APPARENT THAT MOST "SURRENDERS" HAVE BEEN UNDER DURESS

AND SOME WILL GO BACK TO INSURGENCY AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY. THE NUMBER CAPTURED EXCEEDS NUMBER OF GOP ESTIMATES OF "ACTIVE HOSTILES" AND PERHAPS HALF OR MORE REPRESENT SYMPATHIZERS AND SOME INNOCENT BYSTANDERS. EVEN SO, IF 500 ACTIVE INSURGENTS REMAIN AT LARGE AND ACTIVE, THEY CAN CONTINUE TO DO SOME DAMAGE, ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD PERHAPS BE LIMITED TO SMALL ACTIONS OF MINOR IRRITATION TO GOVERNMENT OF BALUCHISTAN. THE GOP HOPES TO BUY THE LOYALTY OF THOSE CAPTURED "INSURGENTS" WITH SUBSIDIES TO SUB-TRIBES AND MAY RELEASE THEM WHEN THE WEATHER IS COLD ENOUGH TO KEEP THEM OUT OF THE MOUNTAINS. STILL UNANSWERED, HOWEVER, IS THE STRENGTH OF THE LOYALTY OF THE TRIBES OF SARDARS, MENGAL AND MARRI, WHO STILL REMAIN IN JAIL IN THE PUNJAB.

4. CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN BALUCHISTAN. GOP LAW MINISTER PIRZADA VISITED BALUCHISTAN SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 1, MET POLITICAL LEADERS IN QUETTA, AND HELD TWO OFFICIAL MEETINGS (ON LAW AND ORDER, AND DEVELOPMENT). HE ALSO TOURED NORTH-CENTRAL PART OF PROVINCE INCLUDING PARTS OF TROUBLED MARRI-BUGTI AND MENGAL AREAS IN EFFORT TO PUBLICIZE GOP'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO BRING BASIC AMENITIES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES TO THE PEOPLE. HE RECEIVED "SURRENDER" OF FEW GROUPS OF MARRIS WHO PLEDGED LOYALTY TO PAKISTAN AND BERATED THEIR OWN TRIBAL LEADERS WHO "HAD LED THEM ASTRAY", IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE STAGE-MANAGED PERFORMANCE. PIRZADA CLAIMED THAT NAZIS IN BALUCHISTAN WAS SPLIT, AND ANNOUNCED THAT KHAN OF KALAT'S YOUNGER BROTHER, MPA PRINCE AGHA ABDUL KARIM, HAD DECLARED WILLINGNESS OF SOME OPPOSITION

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-14 USIA-04 IO-03 OMB-01 AID-05 DRC-01 /073 W

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R 101102Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7132
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
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PROVINCIAL LEGISLATORS TO HOLD "UNCONDITIONAL TALKS" WITH GOVERNMENT. AT SAME TIME, LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN BALUCHISTAN ASSEMBLY, AHMED NAWAZ BUGTI (NAP) DECLARED THAT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS REQUIRED GOP CON-CESSION TO UDF DEMANDS FOR RELEASE OF IMPRISONED LEADERS AND END TO MILITARY OPERATION. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT PIRZADA IS WOOING FOUR NAP MPAS WHO ARE CONSIDERED "MODERATES" IN THE PARTY, FOR A CABINET RESHUFFLE.

5. THE OPPOSITION RAISES AN ALARM. LEADERSHIP OF UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (UDF) COMPOSING ALL OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES (SAVE TEHRIK-I-ISTIQLAL) MEETING IN KARACHI OVER WEEKEND MOUNTED A CAMPAIGN TO EXERT PRESSURE ON THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT TO SEEK A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN BALUCHISTAN. THE UDF HAS MAINTAINED THAT THE INSURGENCY WILL CONINUE SO LONG AS NAP BALUCHISTAN LEADERS, BIZENJO, MENGAL AND MARRI, REMAIN IN JAIL AND HAVE URGED GOP TO RELEASE THEM AND WITHDRAW ARMY FROM ACTIVE
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OPERATIONS WHICH THEY CLAIM ARE ALIENATING TRIBAL POPULACE. THE UDF HAS DECRIED THE INCREASED MILITARY OPERATIONS SINCE AUGUST AND WARNEDTHAT SHOULD THIS INTENSIFY AFTER THE AMNESTY DEADLINE, THE RESULT COULD BE SIMILAR TO THE BANGLADESH TRAGEDY. IN WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A SINGULARLY INEPT ATTEMPT TO PUT OUTSIDE PRESSURE ON BHUTTO TO COME TO A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, THE UDF SENT LETTERS TO PAKISTAN'S PRESIDENT, THE CHIEFS OF STAFF AND THE ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT WITH COPIES TO SEVERAL EMBASSIES IN ISLAMABAD (REF EMBTEL), WARNING OF THE CONSEQUENCE TO PAK UNITY AND REGIONAL PEACE OF BHUTTO'S BALUCHISTAN POLICY. THIS WAS TO BE FOLLOWED BY A TRIP TO LAHORE IN AN ATTEMPT TO CONSULT WITH BIZENJO, MARRI AND MENGAL AND A SPEAKING-CUM-STUDY TOUR OF BALUCHISTAN FROM OCTOBER 9.

6. THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC RESPONSE. THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO UDF CAMPAIGN WAS IMMEDIATE AND SCATHING. AFTER ALMOST A MONTH'S LULL IN THE CONTINUING GOP/NAP

CONFRONTATION (REF AIRGRA) BHUTTO CAME DOWN HARD ON "IRREGULAR" AND ILLEGAL ATTEMPT TO WEAKEN THE LOYALTY OF THE HEAD OF STATE AND ARMED SERVICES AND EXCORIATED UDF'S APPROACHES TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AS ATTEMPT TO "ENCOURAGE FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN PAKISTAN'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS". THE PRIME MINISTER ONCE AGAIN CHARGED THAT NAP'S WALI KHAN WAS WORKING IN TANDEM WITH AFGHAN PRESIDENT DAOUD FOR THE BREAK-UP OF PAKISTAN, GIVING AS PROOF THE TIMING OF UDF ACTIONS TO COINCIDE WITH GOA'S CAMPAIGN TO EMBARRASS PAKISTAN IN THE UN AND ELSEWHERE (USUN 3440). ON OCTOBER 3, A PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION WAS ANNOUNCED (WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN DEvised MORE FOR NWFP THAN FOR BALUCHISTAN) WHICH PROVIDED (#)

SUBVERSION AND SABOTAGE.

7. BHUTTO'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY AND SHORT-TERM OPTIONS.
BHUTTO'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY IN BALUCHISTAN IS TO CHANGE THE BASIC ECONOMIC/SOCIAL TRIBAL SYSTEM AND SUB-NATIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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LOYALTIES BY EXTENDING THE AREA UNDER SETTLED AGRICULTURAL CULTIVATION AND PROMOTING INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE THROUGH LARGE INFUSIONS OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FUNDS AND TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERTISE. IN THE SHORT-TERM, HOWEVER, HE IS FACED WITH NEAR-HIMALAYAN OBSTACLES IN ATTEMPTS TO PROTECT PERSONS AND PROPERTY AGAINST COMMONCRIMINALS AND POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED INSURGENTS, TO EXTEND ADMINISTRATIVE RULE IN DESOLATE, SPARSELY POPULATED COUNTRYSIDE, AND TO ESTABLISH LEGITIMATE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT WHICH HE CAN CONTROL WHILE EXTENDING THE INFLUENCE OF HIS PARTY.

8. BHUTTO'S OPTIONS FOR SHORT-TERM AMELIORATION OF INSURGENCY AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN THE PROVINCE INCLUDE: (A) IGNORE THE REMAINING POCKETS OF INSURGENTS (INCLUDING THOSE IN DETENTION CAMPS) AND DECLARE AMNESTY A "SUCCESS", HOPING THAT DIMINISHED NUMBERS AND COLD WEATHER WILL KEEP INSURGENCY QUIESCENT FOR SOME TIME. THIS MIGHT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH NAP MODERATE MEMBERS PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY TO PROVIDE BROADER BASE FOR COALITION GOVERNMENT, AND COULD BE FOLLOWED BY CABINET RESHUFFLE TO FORCE OUT--OR PROVIDE ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR--THE MOST INCOMPETENT AND UNPOPULAR OF CURRENT MINISTERS. (B) GOP MAY, AS FEARED BY OPPOSITION, INCREASE MILITARY PRESSURE ON REMAINING HOSTILES WHILE ATTEMPTING TO CO-OPT AS MANY INDIVIDUAL LEGISLATORS AS POSSIBLE AND USE EMERGENCY POWERS AND NEW TRIBUNALS TO ARREST AND TRY OPPOSITION FIGURES ON CHARGES

OF TREASON, SUBVERSION AND SABOTAGE UNDER CURRENT LEGIS-
LATION WHICH PROVIDES VERY LOOSE DEFINITIONS FOR THESE
CRIMES. (C) THE GOP MAY DECLARE GOVERNOR'S RULE AND KEEP
PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY FROM MEETING UNTIL PM HAS BETTER
CHANCE TO PUT TOGETHER MORE STABLE MAJORITY OR DISSOLVE
ASSEMBLY AND CALL FOR NEW PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS. GIVEN
THE PRIME MINISTER'S FORECAST OF "GOOD AND PLEASANT"
NEWS, THE FIRST OPTION SEEMS THE MOST LIKELY AT THIS
TIME. BUT BHUTTO'S DEFINITION OF "GOOD AND PLEASANT" COULD
BE A BROAD ONE. WE WILL PRESUMABLY LEARN ENXT WEEK WHICH WAY HE
HAS DECIDED TO GO IN HIS EFFORTS TO DEFUSE THE BALUCHISTAN
PROBLEM IN THE SHORT RUN.
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NOTE BY OC/T: ISLAMABAD 9714/2. (#) OMISSION.
CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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